

Recollections of Dixie.



SEE THE OLD PLANTATION on the dark
Had river bank.
The fields of cotton-
stalks and stubble-
cane.
And the cotton-wood so
tall
All along the levee
wall.
And the negro cabins
down the sodd on
laid.
I see the "white folks"
house," with its
wide verandas
spread
Like great big arms
of welcome to the
guest.
Let him come when'er he will.
When his foot strikes that door-sill
He is partner of its bounty—and its best.

I see the old gin-house, with its broken window-
lights.
And white lint scattered all about the door;
And I hear its creaking noise.
And the clear voice of "the boys"
Singing darkey songs I'll love forever more.

I see the big black kettle on the roaring green-
wood fire.
And the scaffold where the butchered pigs are
laid.
It is now "hog-killing" time.
Darkey fun is in its prime.
Chrismas bladders, blown up, ripen in the
shade.



In each cabin is a sack full of golden hick'ry
nuts.
Walnuts, or pecans so sleek and russet
brown.
Great jugs of persimmon beer.
New-laid eggs, now scarce and "dear."
All to "trade for Chris'mus goodies up in
town."

I catch the mellow strumming of a banjo on the
air.
I smell the spare-ribs in the frying-pan!
"Chris'mus comes but once a year,
Ever sinner wants his share.
So good-bye, I'm gwine to see my Mary
Ann!"

So the long, bright, winter day fades to gray
dusk in the west.
While the stars come out and twinkle in the
sky.
On the frosty fields they beam,
On the dark old bloody stream—
I'm so homesick—I must stop and—have a
cry!

HELLER HUNT.

THE OLD PLANTATION.

A Christmas Eve Story.

HE GOLDEN SUN-
light sparkles on
the river and shines
on the green slope
of lawn leading
down to its banks;
for, though this is
Dec. the 24th, 1859,
the smooth-cut
grass has not yet
turned brown. Out
on the lawn by the
antique moss-grown sun-dial stands, in
eager expectancy, a slim, black figure.
He watches the shadow move slowly—
so very slowly it seems to him—around
the dial. Fifteen minutes—ten min-
utes—five minutes—it will never reach
the hour? At last it falls just on the
figure twelve. Then, with a shout and
a look up at the sun, just overhead, he
speeds off across the lawn, past the
poultry yards, by "the children's
house," all unheeding of the
calls of playmates. Breathless,
he reaches the barn where hangs the
great plantation bell. Holding the rope



YOUNG MEN OF GIRLS TROOP.

and awaiting him, stands Sam, who is
—under the master himself—the ruler
of this little world.

This, the day before Christmas, is a
half-holiday, and begins for every soul
on the plantation a week of careless
merriment.

The old mansion is in festive attire.
The treasures of the Southern woods,
growing vines and berries, and even
winter flowers, have been used in
adorning the great dining-hall and par-
lors, while every bed-room has its
wreaths of crimson yarrow and lovely
holly twisted and fastened with gray,
drooping moss. Above the front
entrance glows a "Welcome!" standing
out in bold relief—the letters formed
of orange and scarlet berries against a
background of soft, green, wood-ferns.
There is a merry din of voices as the
doors swing open and a gay company
of young men and girls troop in. They
crowd into the parlor, throwing off
wraps and hats as they come, and
grouping about the fire, jostle each
other good-naturedly, all endeavoring
to speak at once to their hostess, a
pretty, black-haired matron, looking as
young as her own daughters.

"Have you seen Elsie and Mr. Rod-
ney, Mrs. Cheverill? She started with
us on our walk, and he promised to join
us at the style over the pasture fence,
but he never made his appearance, and
Elsie vanished before we passed by
Cedar Grove."

"It with the strangest thing," put in
little Ernest Travers. "I juth left her
a moment to take a briber from Mith
Annie's dret, and when I came back
she wath gone!"

"Yeth, she wath!" said Ledy Chever-
ill in the same doleful tone; "but the
best part of it was, mother, I am per-
fectly certain that she hid behind one



A CHRISTMAS EVE DREAM.

of the big cedars in the grove until we
all went by. She has not a bit of use
for Ernie, and he knows it; yet he will
torment her.

"Lunch is ready, young ladies; won't
you come fix a bit?" the girl asked, as
she led the way.

They followed her to their several
apartments—all but the eldest daugh-
ter.

As the last one left the room Mrs.
Cheverill said:

"I wish Elsie would come in; you
know I do not approve of single couples
wandering away by themselves in the
woods."

"The truth is, mother, Mr. Rodney
and Elsie became engaged this day, a
year ago. Three months after, they
quarreled about a mere trifle, and since
then they have not been on speaking
terms. It was something of a shock to
both when they met here."

"They would make such a nice couple;
it is a pity," said Mrs. Cheverill, sym-
pathizingly.

"Don't sigh over it, mother. I'll
wager that if they met in the grove the
affair is all fixed by now. There is an
atmosphere about that place perfectly
irresistible to young lovers."

The meal progresses gaily, and the
jolly host has just asked: "What has
become of Elsie?" when the door opens
and, looking very flushed, a little con-
scious, and wholly breathless from fast
walking, she and Rodney appear. He
carries his gun and empty game-bag,
which the butler takes from him with a
slightly deprecating air, while Nellie
removes Miss Stewart's wraps, and Mrs.
Cheverill insists that she shall sit right
down and leave her toilet until after
lunch. So they take their chairs and
make a show of eating, but really ac-
complish but little in that line.

There are some sly, amused glances
thrown at the very conscious pair, but
they are mercifully left unnoticed and
unrattled at their long absence, until the
irrepressible Leda says, with a burst of
long suppressed merriment:

"For what a lot of marriages is this
old plantation answerable! Even from
the time of our grandfathers. Say,
Elsie, did you stop at 'Engagement
Oak'?"

And then, to cover the young couple's
confusion, the gracious hostess
arises, and in the general movement
Elsie escapes to her room.

Christmas Eve! The negro quarters
are alive with light and joy and dance.
Great piles of pine-knots blaze on the
brick and earthen stands which are
placed one in front of each negro-house.
Not rough cabins these, but comforta-
ble frame buildings with huge chim-



neys, in which burn grand fires of oak,
myrtle and pine. In a large, long room,
built for the purpose, with a deep chim-
ney at either end in which the pine-
knots are piled two feet high, are con-
gregated all the young negroes of the

plantation, dancing merrily to the music
of the fiddle.
In the parlors of the "big house" all
is life and light and joy. While the
elders have formed whist parties or sit
quietly conversing, the young people
dance.

Into a slow waltz melody, whose fall
And rise of cadence, rhythmic and sweet,
Holds in its spell their graceful, moving feet.

The lamps glow beneath the softening
tint of their crimson shades. The
fire-light dances and gleams over the
warm-hued carpets, lighting up the de-
licate tint of the walls, reflecting itself
in silver and glass, and making more
ruddy the berries of holly and yapon
above the windows and arching doors.

No one hears the swift beat of horses'
feet upon the hard bed of the broad
avenue. No one sees the pair of jaded
animals with their weary riders, as they
center on the soft grass of the lawn up
to the garden's gate, and, hitching
their bridles to the fence, walk slowly
up the path to the great front door,
closed it is true, but with its glowing
welcome showing out boldly in the
moonlight, and with ruddy gleams
shining through the wide transom above
it. They take each other's hands, and
the girl smiles wanly as the man knocks
boldly, commandingly, at the door.

The gray-haired butler answers the
summons.

"Who shall I say, sah?" he asks, ush-
ering them into a small ante-room.

The man hesitates, but the girl re-
plies:

"Say belated travelers who would
like to see Mr. Cheverill."

The host, half unwillingly, lays down
his hand at whist, and, excusing him-
self, answers the summons.

As he enters the room he recognizes
the girl as the daughter of an old friend
—a fellow planter who lives thirty
miles away.

"Why, my dear Miss Duncan, what
is the meaning of this—almost mid-
night, and you here?"

The girl lays her hand in his proffered
one, and says simply:

"I am Mrs. Robinson now, and this
gentleman is my husband."

In "this gentleman" Mr. Cheverill
recognizes the overseer of his friend,
and hardens immediately. Dropping
the girl's hand, he says, shortly, "Im-
possible!" and awaits their explanation.

His tone stings the young man.

"It is a fact, Mr. Cheverill," he be-
gins impetuously. "I courted Miss Dun-
can openly and honorably, but her
father laughed me to scorn and bid me
pay my court to one in my own sphere.
We kept apart then, I attending to my
duties, and hoping time would soften
him. At last I went to him again and
asked his consent to the renewal of my
attentions. He hooted at the very idea
of such a thing, and bid me remember
that planters' daughters did not marry
their fathers' overseers. Stung to fury,
I told him I should win Miss Duncan in
spite of him, and he, believing it but
an idle boast, allowed me to stay on,
and so—"

"You abused his confidence. Will
you tell me, sir, why you come with all
this to me?"

"O, Mr. Cheverill, listen to me,"
pleaded the girl. "I loved him so, and
could not bear to give him up. He
wanted to go away, saying he knew it
was not right to drag me below my sta-
tion, but my sorrow, my tears, over-
came his resolutions, and we—"

"Run away and get married, like
two fools!" put in the planter, angrily.
"What do you suppose I can do about
it? I don't approve of it at all. I can
tell you. You have lost the station you
have held as Miss Duncan—you can
only rank as Mrs. Robinson, now and
hereafter."

"I know it," she said, quietly, and
looked up smiling in her husband's face.

Robinson looked appealingly at the
planter.

"This is our wedding night, Mr.
Cheverill, and I have not a place to
take her. Her father drove us away
with curses, and she thought of you—
that you might give me employment."

Out from the inner room comes a
burst of music and gay voices. The
girl trembles and looks longingly at
the light and warmth within.

"A nice position you would put me
in," protests Mr. Cheverill. "By em-
ploying you I would give a seeming in-
dorsement to your conduct—which I do
not in the least feel—and anger against
me my good and old friend, your
father."

"But I am so tired, and it is so late,"
murmurs the girl.

"To-night you shall have rest and
entertainment. I turn no one from my
door; but to-morrow will be—"

"Merry Christmas!" comes in one
great shout from the dancers. The
tall clock in the hall peals twelve, and
the great plantation bell jangles merrily,
rung by the little darkeys who have
it in charge.

"Merry Christmas, father! I've caught
you!" shouts Leda, rushing out and
hugging her father ecstatically; then,
catching sight of the strangers, ex-
claims: "Why, Miss—"

"Mrs. Robinson, my dear," interrupts
Mr. Cheverill, impressively; "the wife

of Mr. Duncan's overseer, who is now
out of a place and looking for employ-
ment, which he wishes me to give."

Her position is clearly defined, but
again the young bride smiles fearlessly
in her husband's face.

"Give him the employment, then,
father; we are waiting for you to toast
the Christmas-tide."

Leda went in as she spoke, and from
the negro quarters came the sound of a
Christmas hymn, with its high-pitched
chorus of "Peace on earth and to all
men good will!"

Mr. Cheverill rang the bell near him
sharply.

"Tell Sam I want him," he said to
the boy who came.

The man answered the summons
quickly.

"Merry Christmas, massa; Christmas
gif," he said, as he drew near.

"Merry Christmas, Sam, and here's
your gift," handing him some silver
pieces. "I am sorry to take you from
your fun, but is the overseer's house in
good repair?"

"Yes, sah; but it's dark and shet up."
"Well, have fires lit in all the rooms;
send Elsie to see that everything is
right, and when all is ready let Mr.
Robinson know. I have engaged him
for the next year to be my overseer, and
I hope you will be a very good assistant."

The man went to do as he was bid,
and the young couple rose to express
their joyous thanks.

"Not a word, not a word; you owe it

all to the season, not to me. Do your
duty, Robinson, and let your wife forget
who she has been, and we will get on
well enough. And now excuse me, my
family is waiting," and leaving them
there, in the small, cozy sitting-room,
awaiting the summons to their own
house, the kindly gentleman went in to
his gay home circle.

He had done a good deed and still up-
held most decidedly his pride of class
and station.

"Did you take him, father?" whis-
pered Leda, as she passes him his third
glass of egg-nog.

"Yes; look through the window yon-
der and you will see their shadows on
the curtain."

Far off across the lawn, the light is
gleaming brightly through the white
curtains of the overseer's house, and
within the young wife is saying:

"I would rather have you and this
dear little home, John, than all the
glories of a planter's daughter."

A knock calls them to the door.
A young darkey, bearing a tall, cov-
ered pitcher, presents himself.

"Miss Leda sen' dis aig-nog, and say
as how she hope you'll hab a merry
Christmas and a happy year in de new
home."

The fires are dying down in the negro
quarters, but still the sound of song and
music rings out from the long room,
while the fiddler calls the figures of the
dance, and the dusky forms "wheel and
turn and then salute your partners."

In the "big house" the lights are out
in the parlors, and the tired servants
have gone to bed, for theirs has been a
busy day. The girls gossip softly with
each other, for the chattering will
disturb the old folks, while the young
men smoke their cigars, and Rodney
sees laughing brown eyes in the smoke
of his as he takes his last puff, and,
with a soul-contented sigh, goes to bed.

"Duncan will be furious," says Mr.
Cheverill to his wife, as he relates the
incident of the evening; and she replies,
with the dear contradiction of a wom-
an's heart:

"You were very right to help them,
poor things, at Christmas, too! I won-
der how that girl could ever so forget
what was due to her station?"

Off in the "overseer's house" across
the lawn, there is peace and joy. Love,
the great comforter, has made them ob-
livi-ous to tired limbs and strange sur-
roundings. With light hearts and hap-
py smiles, they look into each other's
eyes and remember not the barriers of
caste.

FIRST CHRISTMAS BELLS

In the United States Chimed From
Venerable St. Luke's.

The first Christmas church chimes
ever heard in the United States rang

out from the steeple of "St. Luke's" or
the old "Smithfield church" in the Isle
of Wight county, Va. That was

on Dec. 25, 1632, twelve years after the
sanding of the first organized body of
Christians.

The antiquity of this venerable
church is proven by two deeply marked
date bricks that came down with the
east wall in the year 1887, when the
original top fell in.

The church having been abandoned
as a house of worship in 1836, in the year
1885 Rev. David Harr, then rector of the
church at Smithfield, Va., and now the
assistant minister of the Church of the
Epiphany of Washington, D. C., under-
took the work of having the old church
put in perfect and complete order.

In the restoration twelve of the
small windows composing the east
window, the nave windows and vestry-
room windows are to be memorials. In
the east window will be one each to
Washington, the only memorial win-
dow to him in the United States; Lee
Bridges, the builder of the
church; Rev. Mr. Hubbard, last colonial
pastor of the church up to 1802, when he
died; Bishops Mathew Moore, Meade
and Johns, Virginia's four deceased pas-
tors; Sir Walter Raleigh, Capt. John
Smith, John Rolfe, husband of Pocahontas,
and Rev. Dr. Blair, founder of
William and Mary college.

The southwest corner window in the
nave will be a memorial of Pocahontas,
provided principally by her descend-
ants, and the two opposite ones are
memorials of Parsons Hunt and Whit-
taker, first and second chaplains with
Capt. John Smith in the Virginia col-
ony. Whittaker baptized Pocahontas
and married her to Rolfe. The first
roof was put on the church in 1633, the
second in 1737, the third about 1831 and
the present new one in 1887.

THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY.

How to Prepare It for the Gastronomical
Fete.

"Turkey boiled is turkey spoiled,
Turkey roasted is turkey lost.
But for turkey braised the Lord be praised."

There may be diverse opinions regard-
ing the two first lines, but in regard to
the third there will be no dissenting
voice when once it has been tried. Fill
the turkey with the best force-meat
you can make. The most elegant is
made of sweetbreads and mushrooms,
or truffles intermixed, but an ordinary
bread or chestnut stuffing, made savory
with seasonings, will be very nice.
After stuffing hold the bird breast down
over a bright fire to stiffen it, and then
lard with strips of salt pork. Place in
a large saucepan, breast upward, with
sliced carrot, onion, celery, and parsley,
and cover with broth. Cook closely
covered in the oven until the bird is
tender, basting it occasionally to give
the desired light brown color. When
done, strain and thicken the gravy and
serve in a boat. For an elegant com-
pany dish garnish with stoned olives,
small force-meat balls made of chicken,
mushrooms, and sweetbreads cut in
dice.

THE HERO OF A ROMANCE.

Old Hanover, About whom a Beautiful
Christmas Story was Written.

The portrait that accompanies this
article appeared in the Christmas num-
ber of Harper's Magazine a year ago,
as the picture of the hero of a very en-
tertaining novelette by Thomas Nelson
Page. No man knows the Southern
colored man and his dialect and his
mental processes better than Mr. Page,
and thousands of readers will feel that
they have made almost a personal ac-
quaintance with "Ole Hanover" when



OLD HANOVER

they have read what Mr. Page makes
him say.

But on the other hand, a greater
number of persons will be puzzled by
the recollection that they have
often met this identical colored
man shuffling along the streets
of New York, instead of in Vir-
ginia, where the story places him. As
a matter of fact, "Ole Hanover" is a
thoroughbred New York whitewasher, and
beautiful as Mr. Page's story is, it
is not the true story. The old darkey's
portrait, painted by John W. Alexan-
der, now hangs on the dining-room wall
in the Fellowship club on East
Twenty-ninth street, that city, and
Mr. Alexander once told his friends
in the club, where he is the vice-presi-
dent, just how it came to be painted.

Mr. Alexander saw the old man on
the street and asked him to come up to
his stud o in the Chelsea apartment
house in Twenty-third street. Having
gotten him there, he told him he
would make him a handsome present if
he would stand up and be painted. The
old man was more than willing, and as
he stood before the artist he rattled on
in characteristic darkey fashion, talk-
ing about everything he could think
about, and Mr. Alexander encouraged
him, lest he should get tired of stand-
ing.

"Ah dun know when ah was bo'n," he
was saying when the right pose was
struck by him and caught on the canvas.

"Ah cyarn't say nuffin' 'bout dat, but
ah'm pow'ful old. Ah's so old dat ah
seen de British gumbots a-fightin' away
off in de Gulf ob Mexico when ah was a
chile, and dey was so far away de sound
ob de guns was nuffin' but jist pif, pif,
pif."

That is what Ole Hanover was say-
ing as the picture was laid out, and with
each repetition of the word "pif" he
poked out his forefinger as you see him
doing in the portrait.

By and by he grew more at ease and
of course, grew a little more familiar in
his speech. He was evidently pleased
by seeing all the elegances and orna-
ments of the painter's beautiful studio.

Such is the true story about Ole Han-
over and his "po'trait."



RELIC OF CHRISTMAS 1632.

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the old "Smithfield church" in the Isle
of Wight county, Va. That was